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EDITORIAL.

THE North Greenland Expedition of 1895, the primary object of which was to bring back Lieutenant Peary and his companions to the United States, left St. Johns on the 11th of July. The start had been planned for the first of the month, and the unfortunate delay made it necessary to omit the considerable stops which were to have been made in South Greenland for the purpose of studying the glaciers of that region. Brief stops were, however, made at Holstensborg, Godhavn, Jacobshavn and Atanikerdluk. Melville Bay was passed without notable incident, the water being nearly free from ice. Cape York was reached on the 30th of July, and Whale Sound on the 31st. Here for the first time, no more than twenty-five or thirty miles from our goal, ice was encountered in such quantity as to stay our progress.

Mr. Peary's headquarters were reached on the 3d of August, where the main facts concerning his year's work were learned. The provisions which had been cached on the ice-cap for the trip of 1894, not being used that year, were relied upon for the journey of the succeeding season. In September 1894, after the departure of the *Falcon*, an attempt was made to visit the nearer caches. One of the objects of the visit was to get the provisions out from beneath the season's snow, so as to make them more accessible when the journey of the following spring should be begun. Although the same caches had been visited in the preceding July, and the provisions then raised to the surface of the snow, it was found in September that the snowfall of the summer had been so heavy that neither of the two most important caches could be found, even the signals having been completely buried. After this discovery little hope was entertained that search for the caches would be more successful in the following spring. As the buried caches contained the pemmican, which was to

have been the chief article of food, and the alcohol, which was to have served as fuel, Mr. Peary was obliged to face the prospective loss of both. With this unpleasant outlook, the winter was passed.

Instead of giving up the proposed journey across the ice-cap, Mr. Peary made such provision for the trip as was possible, and on the first of April, accompanied by Lee and Henson, started for Independence Bay. As had been expected, the important caches were not found. In spite of this, the crossing of the ice-cap was successfully accomplished, the distal edge being reached on the 13th of May. The rest of the month was spent on the land about the bay. From lack of provisions a longer stay was impracticable, and the return journey across the ice was begun on the 1st of June and ended on the 25th.

The enterprise and courage with which Mr. Peary conceived and attempted to execute his plans would seem to have entitled him to more consideration at the hands of the powers that be. On two successive years his well matured plans have been thwarted by circumstances over which he had no control, and upon which he could in no way count.

While adverse circumstances have made it impossible for him to carry out in full his plans with reference to the north coast of Greenland, he has nevertheless accomplished much during his Arctic residence. He has twice (in 1892 and 1895) crossed the ice-cap from Inglefield Gulf to Independence Bay, and has gathered information concerning the inland ice, and the ice-free territory beyond, which possesses unique value. Further, he has mapped a considerable stretch of the coast west of Greenland, in the vicinity of his headquarters. The full value of this work will first appear when the map is published, but a few general statements will indicate something of its scope. It covers the coast from Cape Alexander (lat. $78^{\circ} 10'$) on the north, to Cape York (lat. $75^{\circ} 55'$) on the south. Within this latitude, the range in longitude is nearly 8° . The coast is very irregular, as may be inferred from the fact that its actual length, including the islands near the mainland, is about 1000 miles. A comparison of Mr. Peary's MS. map with the earlier charts of the

same region reveals the extent and importance of the changes, which are so great as to make it apparent that the new map is really such, and not merely a corrected copy of the old. The modifications are so extensive that, were it not for the names, the new map and the last edition of the chart of the same region, issued by the Hydrographic Office, would hardly be taken to represent the same coast. In some places the general trend of the coast is altered many degrees. Many bays are mapped which have not hitherto found representation, and many indentations of the coast which have heretofore appeared on the charts, have been changed in position and size. Eleven islands which do not appear on the published charts referred to have been accurately located, and the position, shape and size of those heretofore represented have been corrected. A large number of glaciers, probably as many as 100, have been located with approximate accuracy, within the region where but ten were represented on the published chart referred to, and even these were in some cases in false positions and greatly exaggerated in size. Astrup's map of Melville Bay, already published, should be mentioned in this connection, since it was prepared while its author was a member of Mr. Peary's corps. Geographers will not fail to appreciate the magnitude and the importance of this cartographic work.

In addition to the map, Mr. Peary has kept a series of meteorological records, probably the most accurate and elaborate which have ever been secured in so high a latitude. Besides the more formal records, he has been observant of the behavior of winds about the ice-sheet, and in this way has come into possession of facts which are not without significance in connection with the problems of glaciology. He has made careful measurements of the rate of motion of one of the most active glaciers of the region, and has carried them through a sufficiently long period of time to give them especial value. He has brought back two large and choice meteorites from the coast east of Cape York, the study of which will possess much popular as well as scientific interest.

In quite another line important studies have been prosecuted

to a successful issue. During his three years and a half of Arctic residence—adding the time of the earlier visit to that of the later—Mr. Peary has made a study of the Eskimos of North Greenland. During this time he has personally come into contact with almost every man, woman and child on the west coast north of the Danish possessions. He has lived among them in such a way as to get from them data which no temporary visitor could secure, and which no one, not understanding their language and not commanding their confidence, could hope to gain. As a result, he is in possession of much fuller knowledge of these people than any one else has ever been. The results of his study, when published, will be an important contribution to ethnology.

Indirectly, the expeditions which Mr. Peary has caused to be made into northern waters have not been without results. Five successive voyages, without accident, have shown that Arctic navigation, under proper management, is not so dangerous as has been supposed. Through those who have accompanied these expeditions much information has been secured touching the natural history, the geography and the geology of the regions visited. Some of these data have been published, while others have not yet appeared, but they must, nevertheless, be taken into account in enumerating the results of the several expeditions for which Mr. Peary has been responsible. It will be readily seen that the returns are, in the aggregate, very considerable, and that, although the object which was first in mind when the last expedition was planned has not been fully attained, the results which have been achieved cannot be looked upon as incommensurate with the outlay.

R. D. S.

So far as concerns the geographical and geological work of the expedition which has just returned, it may be said that the coast of Greenland, from about $64^{\circ} 25'$ to $78^{\circ} 45'$, was seen at sufficiently close range to allow of a general study of its geographical features. This study was interrupted more or less by the fog which hung about the coast with exasperating persistency. Nearly the whole of the coast of Disco was seen under advantageous conditions. At Holstensborg, Godhavn, Jakobshavn

and Atanikerdluk, opportunity was afforded for a cursory study of local geological features. At the last named place fossil leaves were collected in considerable numbers.

The month of August was spent between the parallels of $75^{\circ} 50'$ and $78^{\circ} 45'$, the latter being the most northerly latitude reached. Between these parallels nearly every mile of the Greenland coast was seen at close range, and a considerable number of glaciers were studied in detail. The American coast also was seen at intervals between the parallels of $78^{\circ} 45'$ and $71^{\circ} 30'$. While few stops were made on this side, the land was within sufficiently close view to make the recognition of its general features possible. Its contrast with the coast of Greenland in corresponding latitudes was most instructive.

In connection with glacial studies, some interesting facts were gathered in connection with glacier motion and glacier work. Some determinations were also made concerning the former extension of ice in relatively recent geological time, and concerning recent changes of level.

In other lines the expedition was successful. Of special interest are the two meteorites which were secured at a point a few miles off Cape York. The Falcon attempted to reach them in 1894, but was unable to do so on account of ice. The larger of the stones has a weight of something like three tons, while the weight of the smaller probably does not exceed one thousand pounds. Both appear to be wholly metallic. R. D. S.

What appears to be authentic information concerning the Jackson-Harmsworth polar expedition has been recently published by the London *Times*, from which paper the following facts are gleaned. The Windward reached inhabited lands about the middle of September in the course of her homeward journey. She has experienced an exceptionally severe winter in the Arctic regions, and the difficulties arising from extreme cold have been aggravated by the fact that she encountered a great amount of ice through which she was obliged to force her way. The information furnished by the dispatches indicates that on the 7th of September, 1894, the expedition arrived on the coast of Franz-

Josef Land, and the total equipment was safely landed. A few days later ice closed in about the Windward in such wise that she was unable to escape from the coast, and remained there through the winter. From this point the party began its northward journey on the 10th of March. By May they had established a depot of provisions as far north as latitude $81^{\circ} 20'$, which was about 100 miles beyond the point where the winter was spent. The outlook for the future work of the expedition is good, and it is believed that when the ship goes out again next year to meet the party, it will bring the welcome news of successful exploration in the almost unknown area. The party is reported to be in good health and full of courage with reference to their future work.

R. D. S.